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mid.

discussed more fully below. With this configuration, garages 50 allow plate 32 and pallet 52 to be heated to a desired temperature.

\ On page 4, line 29, please cancel "plat" and insert--plate--in place thereof so that the paragraph containing this sentence reads as follows:

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Also included in AMHS 16 is an airlock 60 that is designed to thermally condition plate 32 before entering write chamber 24. Vacuum handling system 53 facilitates movement of plate 32/pallet 52 combination within airlock 60 and between airlock 60 and write chamber 24, discussed more fully below. Garages 50, airlock 60 and robotic mechanisms are enclosed by a housing 62 to provide cleanroom filtration and temperature control of an ambient enclosed by housing 62. AMHS 16 also includes a detection system (not shown), such as a barcode reader, that senses information recorded on pallet 52 that indicates characteristics of pallet 52, such as the address of the garage 50 that corresponds thereto, the size plate 32 supported thereon and the like.

\ On page 7, line 14, please cancel "plate32" and insert--plate 32--in place thereof so that the paragraph containing this sentence reads as follows:

A3

Referring to Figs. 3, 6 and 7, a cross-sectional view of airlock 60 is shown with a lift mechanism disposed within airlock chamber 72. Lift mechanism includes two spaced-apart platforms 92a and 92b and a static shield 94. The lift mechanism operates to move the plate 32/pallet 52 combination, resting on platform 92a, from a position in

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Cond. airlock chamber 72 proximate to a slot valve (not shown) to a position proximate to rapid thermal condition system 90. Vacuum handling system 53 includes a pair of linear robots (not shown) that move plate 32/ pallet 52 combination among platforms 92a, 92b and airlock 60 and write chamber 24. The vacuum handling system 53 pushes a polished rod 53a through a pair of sliding seals 53b. The volume between these seals is pumped so that an effective seal is maintained with airlock chamber 72 with minimal forces required.

✓ On page 11, line 16, please cancel "an" and insert--a-- in place thereof so that the paragraph containing this sentence reads as follows:

24 A third linear motor includes a coil 338 and stator 340. Coil 338 is coupled to bearing housing 314 and is in electromagnetic communication with stator 340. Stator 340 extends parallel to the Y direction. A fourth linear motor includes a coil 342 and stator 344. Coil 342 is coupled to bearing housing 316 and is in electromagnetic communication with stator 344. Stator 344 extends parallel to the Y direction. Stators 340 and 344 extend between opposing grounding bodies 348 and 350. In addition, journals 322 and 324 extend between, and are coupled to, grounding bodies 348 and 350. To reduce the friction to which journals 310, 312, 322, 324 are exposed, a fluid-bearing system is employed.

On page 11, line 32, please cancel "an" and insert--a-- in place thereof and on page 12, line 9, please cancel "to atmosphere" and insert--to the atmosphere--in place thereof so that the paragraph containing these sentences reads as follows:

Referring to Figs. 1 and 13, fluid, such as air, is injected into air inlet 308c by stage fluid control subsystem 71 to provide a cushion, referred to as a fluid-bearing, between exterior surface 312c and exterior surface 309a. In this manner, mechanical disturbance due, in part, to imperfections in the machining of the various parts of stage 28 may be avoided. To that end, fluid is introduced into air inlet 308c. The fluid exiting air inlet 308c bifurcates into two substantially symmetrical flows. One of the flows is evacuated through annular grooves 308h, 308i and 308j. The remaining flow is evacuated through annular grooves 308k, 308l and 308m. Annular grooves 308h, 308i, 308j, 308k, 308l and 308m are in fluid communication with stage fluid control subsystem 71. The pressure associated with fluid entering air inlet 308c is greater than the pressure associated with annular grooves 308h, 308i, 308j, 308k, 308l and 308m. Air entering air inlet 308c travels toward annular grooves 308h, 308i, 308j, 308k, 308l and 308m between exterior surface 312c and exterior surface 309a. Fluid entering annular grooves 308j and 308k is vented to atmosphere through exhaust passages 308p and 308s, respectively. Fluid traveling into annular grooves 308i and 308l is evacuated under vacuum of approximately 10 Torr by a vacuum system (not shown) in fluid communication therewith via exhaust passageways 308o and 308r, respectively. Fluid traveling into annular grooves 308h and 308m is evacuated under vacuum of approximately 0.1 Torr by a vacuum system (not shown) in fluid communication therewith via exhaust passageways 308n and 308q, respectively. In this manner, independent evacuation pressures are provided among annular grooves 308h, 308i, 308j, 308k, 308l and 308m.